

Norhill Historic District

Design Guidelines Review
Public Hearing

Tuesday, March 24, 2026



PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

Houston Office of Preservation Staff

Norhill Design Guidelines Project Manager:

Terrance Jackson – Planner III, Historic Preservation

HOP + Planning Dept Staff:

Robert Williamson – Deputy Director, Planning and Development Dept

Yasmin Arslan – Interim Preservation Officer

Samantha de Leon

Charles Sadler

Erin Edwards

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- Norhill Poll Results
- Math Equation(s)/Weighted Averages
- Norhill Design Guideline HAHC Review/Comment(s)
- Public Comment Period (2 min each)
- Adjournment

Planning and Development Department Norhill Historic District Homepage for Links



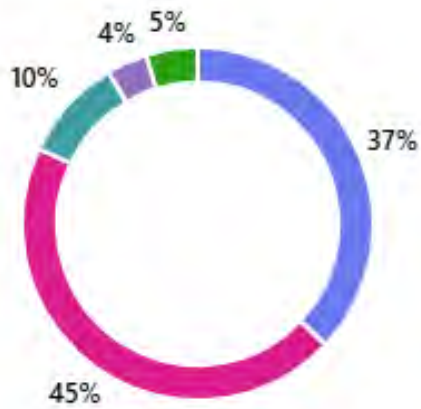
Norhill Survey/Poll Results

Norhill Design Guideline Process:

- Four neighborhood meetings/workshops have been held
- Two separate resident surveys have been conducted
- Survey methodology: 2024 online and hardcopy and 2025 mailout
- 189 (online) + 7 (hardcopy) responses to first poll/survey
- 196 responses to online/hardcopy (first poll/survey)
- Survey mailout to all 855 Norhill homeowners
- 208 responses to mailout survey (second poll/survey)
- Results tabulated individually and combined
- Weighted-average methodology to determine results
- Resulted in three different drafts of the Norhill Design Guidelines

Weighted Average Methodology

Question: What would be the acceptable minimum distance of a 2-story addition from the front property line on an interior lot?



● 40 ft	70
● 45 ft	85
● 50 ft	18
● 55 ft	7
● 60 ft	9

$$70 \text{ (residents for a 40' setback)} \div 189 \text{ (total residents surveyed)} = 37\% \\ 40 \times 37\% = \underline{15}$$

$$85 \text{ (residents for a 45' setback)} \div 189 \text{ (total residents surveyed)} = 45\% \\ 45 \times 45\% = \underline{20.25}$$

$$18 \text{ (residents for a 50' setback)} \div 189 \text{ (total residents surveyed)} = 10\% \\ 50 \times 10\% = \underline{5}$$

$$7 \text{ (residents for a 55' setback)} \div 189 \text{ (total residents surveyed)} = 4\% \\ 55 \times 4\% = \underline{2}$$

$$9 \text{ (residents for a 60' setback)} \div 189 \text{ (total residents surveyed)} = 5\% \\ 60 \times 5\% = \underline{3}$$

Totals from survey added to get results: $15 + 20.25 + 5 + 2 + 3 = 45.3'$

Weighted Averages: Poll Comparison

June 2025 results							
Range	Avg Ft	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg		
Question 6 1-Story rear setback	3 or 5	3	127	66%	66%	2.0	
	6 to 10	8	31	17%	83%	1.4	
	10 to 15	12.5	26	13%	96%	1.6	
	>15	9	7	5%	101%	0.5	
		191	101%		5.4	Wtd Avg	
Question 7 2-story front setback		Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
		40	103	53%	53%	21.2	
		45	45	23%	76%	10.4	
		50	31	17%	93%	8.5	
		55	10	6%	99%	3.3	
		60	0	0%	0	0.0	
		189	99%		43.4	Wtd Avg	
Question 8 2-Story rear setback	Range	Avg Ft	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
	3 or 5	3	87	45%	45%	1.4	
	5 to 10	7.5	27	14%	59%	1.1	
	10 to 15	12.5	27	14%	73%	1.8	
	15 to 20	17.5	30	15%	88%	2.6	
	20 to 25	22.5	12	7%	95%	1.6	
	25 to 30	27.5	9	5%	100%	1.4	
		192	100%		9.7	Wtd Avg	
Question 10 2-story rear setback corner lot	Range	Avg Ft	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
	3	3	1	6%	6%	3	
	3-5	4	2	12%	18%	8	
	5-8	6.5	1	6%	24%	6.5	
	5-10	7.5	5	29%	53%	37.5	
	10	10	3	18%	71%	30	
	14	14	1	6%	76%	14	
	15	15	1	6%	82%	15	
	15-20	17.5	2	12%	94%	35	
	25	25	1	6%	100%	25	
		102.50	17	100%		10.2	Wtd. Avg.

2024 Results					
Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
3 or 5	91	48%	48%	1.4	
6	56	30%	78%	1.8	
10	28	15%	93%	1.5	
15	14	7%	100%	1.1	
	189	100%		5.8	Wtd Avg
Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
40	70	37%	37%	14.8	
45	85	45%	82%	20.2	
50	18	10%	92%	4.8	
55	7	4%	95%	2.0	
60	9	5%	100%	2.9	
	189	100%		44.7	Wtd Avg
Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
3 or 5	0	0	0	0	
10	66	35%	35%	3.5	
15	15	8%	43%	1.2	
20	25	13%	56%	2.6	
25	63	33%	89%	8.3	
30	20	11%	100%	3.2	
	189	100%		18.8	Wtd Avg
					N/A

2024 & 2025 Combined Results					
Avg Ft	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
3	218	57%	57%	1.7	
7	87	23%	80%	1.6	
11.25	54	14%	94%	1.6	
12	21	6%	100%	0.7	
	380	100%		5.6	Wtd Avg
Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
40	173	45%	45%	17.8	
45	130	34%	78%	15.1	
50	49	13%	91%	6.3	
55	17	4%	95%	2.4	
60	9	2%	97%	1.4	
	378	97%		43.0	Wtd Avg
Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
3	94	24%	24%	0.7	
7.5	93	24%	48%	1.8	
12.5	42	11%	59%	1.4	
17.5	55	14%	73%	2.5	
22.5	75	19%	93%	4.3	
27.5	29	7%	100%	2.1	
	388	100%		12.8	Wtd Avg
					N/A

Weighted Averages: Poll Comparison

June 2025 results						
	Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
Question 11	3 or 5	3	136	70%	70%	2.1
1-Story side setback non-driveway	6	6	33	17%	87%	1.0
	7	7	10	8%	95%	0.6
	8	8	13	5%	100%	0.4
			192	100%		4.1 Wtd Avg
Question 12						
1-Story side setback driveway	10	10	89	46%	46%	4.6
	12	12	58	30%	76%	3.6
	14	14	31	16%	92%	2.2
	16	16	14	8%	100%	1.3
			192	100%		11.7 Wtd Avg
Question 13	Range					
2-Story side setback non-driveway	3 or 5	3	105	54%	54%	1.6
	6	6	42	22%	76%	1.3
	7	7	12	6%	82%	0.4
	8	8	33	18%	100%	1.4
			192	100%		4.8 Wtd Avg
Question 14						
2-Story side setback driveway	10	10	81	42%	42%	4.2
	12	12	39	21%	63%	2.5
	14	14	32	16%	79%	2.2
	16	16	22	12%	91%	1.9
	18	18	18	10%	101%	1.8
			192	101%		12.7 Wtd Avg

2024 Results						
	Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
	3	3	147	78%	78%	2.3
	6	6	31	16%	94%	1.0
	7	7	4	2%	96%	0.1
	8	8	7	4%	100%	0.3
			189	100%		3.8 Wtd Avg
	10	10	68	36%	36%	3.6
	12	12	100	53%	89%	6.3
	14	14	13	7%	96%	1.0
	16	16	8	4%	100%	0.7
			189	100%		11.6 Wtd Avg
	3	3	128	68%	68%	2.0
	6	6	33	17%	85%	1.0
	7	7	5	3%	88%	0.2
	8	8	23	12%	100%	1.0
			189	100%		4.2 Wtd Avg
	10	10	56	30%	30%	3.0
	12	12	26	14%	43%	1.7
	14	14	82	43%	87%	6.1
	16	16	18	10%	96%	1.5
	18	18	7	4%	100%	0.7
			189	100%		12.9 Wtd Avg

2024 & 2025 Combined Results						
	Feet	Responses	% of Total	Cum %	Wtd Avg	
	3	3	283	74%	74%	2.2
	6	6	64	17%	91%	1.0
	7	7	14	4%	95%	0.3
	8	8	20	5%	100%	0.4
			381	100%		3.9 Wtd Avg
	10	10	157	41%	41%	4.1
	12	12	158	41%	83%	5.0
	14	14	44	12%	94%	1.6
	16	16	22	6%	100%	0.9
			381	100%		11.6 Wtd Avg
	3	3	233	61%	61%	1.8
	6	6	75	20%	81%	1.2
	7	7	17	4%	85%	0.3
	8	8	56	15%	100%	1.2
			381	100%		4.5 Wtd Avg
	10	10	137	36%	36%	3.6
	12	12	65	17%	53%	2.0
	14	14	114	30%	83%	4.2
	16	16	40	10%	93%	1.7
	18	18	25	7%	100%	1.2
			381	100%		12.7 Wtd Avg

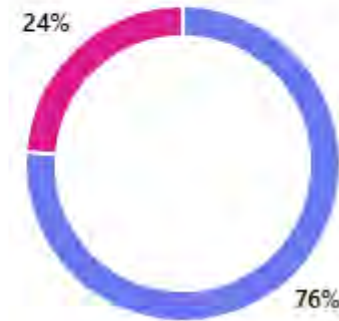
Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

3. Should the house size be related to the lot size?

Select one answer

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

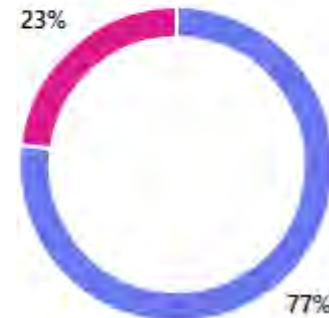
True	144
False	45



4. Should there be a restriction on house size in relation to lot size, known as floor-to-area ratio (F.A.R.)? Example: a 2,500 sq ft. house on a 5,000 sq ft. lot has an FAR of 0.50 ($2,500/5,000=0.5$).

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

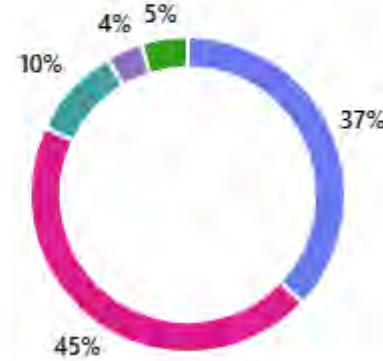
Yes	161
No	48



Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

4. What would be the acceptable **minimum** distance of a **2-story addition** from the front property line on an interior lot?

40 ft	70
45 ft	85
50 ft	18
55 ft	7
60 ft	9



Weighted Avg. - 45.5'

189 Participants

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

7. The typical Norhill home has a 15 ft. front setback from the street. What should be the minimum front setback be for a 2-story addition? View guidelines for visual reference.

40 ft.	111
45 ft.	49
50 ft.	36
55 ft.	13



Weighted Avg. - 43.4'

208 Participants

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

6. What is an acceptable minimum rear setback for a **2-story addition**?

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

10 ft	66
15 ft	15
20 ft	25
25 ft	63
30 ft	20

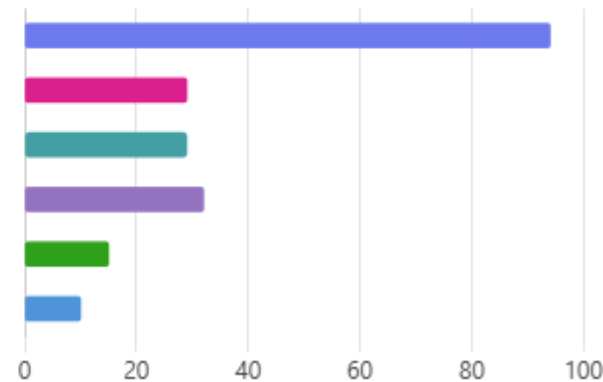


Weighted Avg. - 18.8'

8. What is an acceptable rear setback for a 2-story addition? View guidelines for visual reference.

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

3 ft. or 5 ft. (per city code)	94
5 to 10 ft.	29
10 to 15 ft.	29
15 to 20 ft.	32
20 to 25 ft.	15
25 to 30 ft.	10



Weighted Avg. - 9.7'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

5. What is an acceptable minimum rear setback for a **1-story addition**?

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

3 ft or 5 ft (per city code)	91
6 ft	56
10 ft	28
15 ft	14



Weighted Avg. - 6.8 [5']

Weighted Avg. - 5.8 [3']

Average = 6.3'

6. The typical Norhill lot is between 100 ft. and 104 ft. deep with a front setback of 15 ft. from the street and per city code a rear setback of 3 ft. or 5 ft. What would be the acceptable minimum rear setback for a 1-story addition? See guidelines for visual reference.

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

3 ft. or 5 ft. (per city code)	137
Between 6 and 10 ft.	35
Between 10 and 15 ft.	27
More than 15 ft.	10

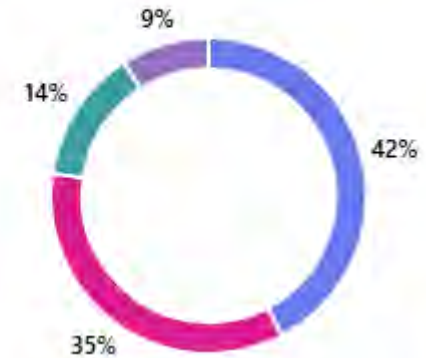


Weighted Avg. - 5.4'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

7. What is an acceptable minimum rear setback for a **1-story addition on an atypical** lot size (6,000 - 6,999)?

3 ft or 5 ft (per city code)	80
6 ft	66
10 ft	26
15 ft	17



Weighted Avg. - 6.9 [5']

Weighted Avg. - 6.1 [3']

Average = 6.5'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

8. What is an acceptable minimum rear setback for a **2-story addition on an atypical** lot size (6,000 - 6,999)?

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

10 ft	60
15 ft	14
20 ft	19
25 ft	73
30 ft	23

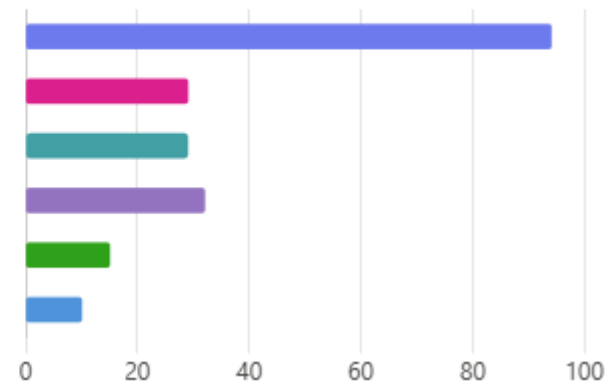


Weighted Avg. – 19.6'

8. What is an acceptable rear setback for a 2-story addition? View guidelines for visual reference.

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

3 ft. or 5 ft. (per city code)	94
5 to 10 ft.	29
10 to 15 ft.	29
15 to 20 ft.	32
20 to 25 ft.	15
25 to 30 ft.	10



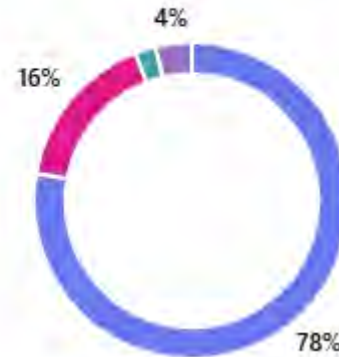
Weighted Avg. - 9.7'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

9. What is an acceptable **minimum** side setback (non-driveway side) for a **1-story addition** on an interior lot?

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

3 ft or 5 ft (per city code)	147
6 ft	31
7 ft	4
8 ft	7



Weighted Avg. - 5.2' [5']

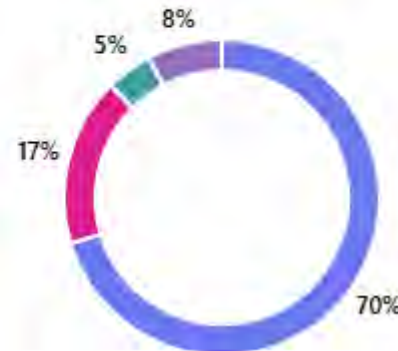
Weighted Avg. - 3.6' [3']

Average = 4.4'

11. The typical lot in Norhill is 50'-54' wide. What is an acceptable minimum side setback (non-driveway side) for a 1-story addition on a mid-block lot?

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

3 ft. or 5 ft. (per city code)	147
6 ft.	36
7 ft.	10
8 ft.	16

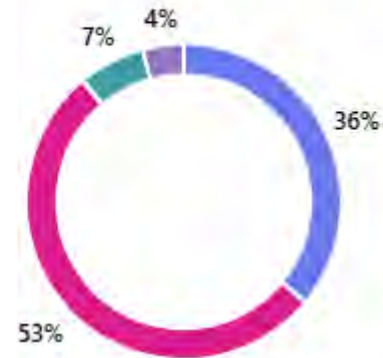


Weighted Avg. - 4.1'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

10. What is an acceptable **minimum** side setback (driveway side) for a **1-story addition** on an interior lot?

10 ft	68
12 ft	100
14 ft	13
16 ft	8

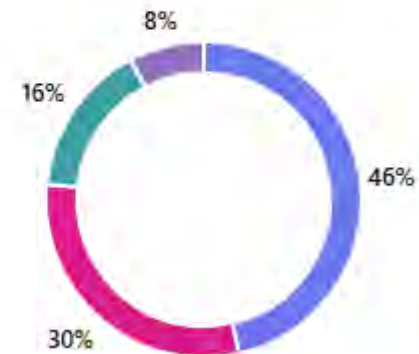


Weighted Avg. - 11.6'

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

12. On a typical Norhill lot, what is an acceptable minimum side setback (driveway side) for a 1-story addition on a mid-block lot?

10 ft.	97
12 ft.	63
14 ft.	33
16 ft.	16



Weighted Avg. - 11.7'

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

11. What is an acceptable **minimum** side setback (non-driveway side) for a **2-story addition** on an interior lot?

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

3 ft or 5 ft (per city code)	128
6 ft	33
7 ft	5
8 ft	23



Weighted Avg. - 5.6' [5']

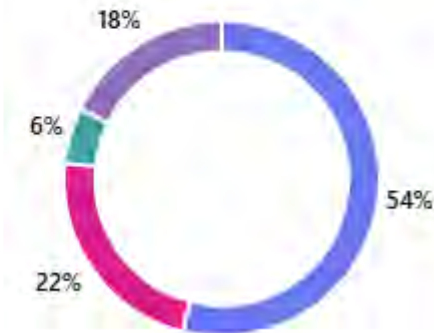
Weighted Avg. - 4.2' [3']

Average = 4.9'

13. On a typical Norhill lot, what is an acceptable minimum side setback (non-driveway side) for a 2-story addition on a mid-block lot?

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

3 ft. or 5 ft. (per city code)	113
6 ft.	47
7 ft.	12
8 ft.	37



Weighted Avg. - 4.8'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

12. What is an acceptable **minimum** side setback (driveway side) for a **2-story addition** for an interior lot?

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

10 ft	56
12 ft	26
14 ft	82
16 ft	18
18 ft	7



Weighted Avg. - 13.0'

14. What is an acceptable minimum side setback (driveway side) for a 2-story addition for a mid-block lot?

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

10 ft.	87
12 ft.	44
14 ft.	33
16 ft.	24
18 ft.	21



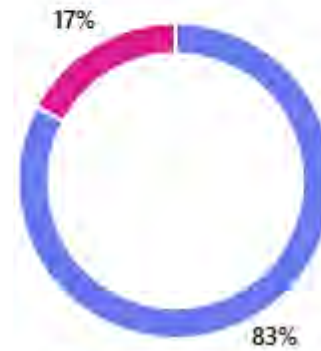
Weighted Avg. - 12.7'

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

June 2025 Additional Questions

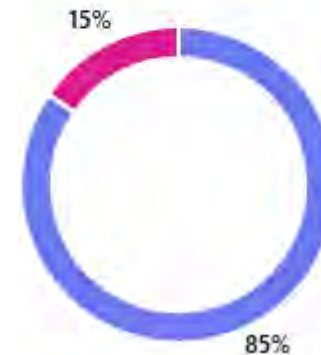
15. Would you like the option of replacing original windows with new windows that are the same size, shape and pattern as the originals but not necessarily of the original material? Example: Replace original single-pane wood windows with double-pane aluminum clad wood windows.

● Yes 173
● No 36



16. Would you like the option to replace the front door with one of the same style, proportion, and character of the original that is not of original material?

● Yes 177
● No 32



Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

June 2025 Additional Questions

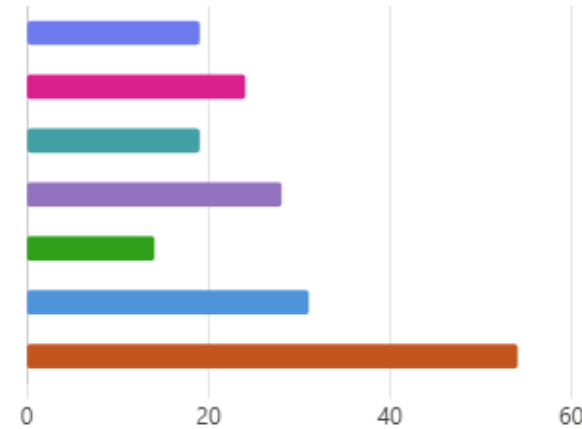
17. Would you like the option to replace original siding with siding of similar style, proportion, and character of the original but not of original material? Example: Replace wood siding with cementitious siding.



Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

13. What is the **maximum** allowable living area square footage on an interior 5,000 -5,999 square foot lot?

● 1900	19
● 2000	24
● 2100	19
● 2200	28
● 2300	14
● 2400	31
● more than 2400	54



Weighted Avg. – 2,211 sq ft

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

4. Should there be a restriction on house size in relation to lot size, known as floor-to-area ratio (F.A.R.)? Example: a 2,500 sq ft. house on a 5,000 sq ft. lot has an FAR of 0.50 (2,500/5,000=0.5).

5. If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, what do you feel is an acceptable F.A.R.?

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

127
Responses

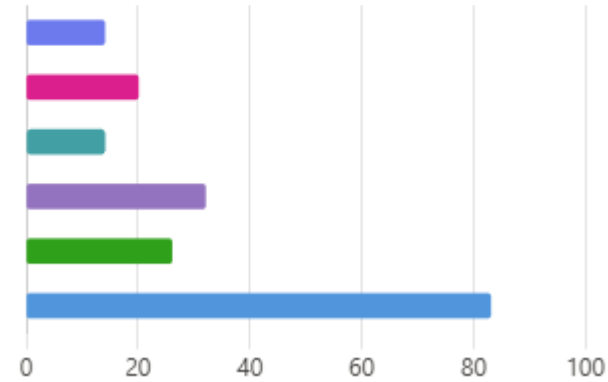
Weighted Avg. 0.47

Weighted Avg. sq ft for 5,000-5,999 sf lot @ .47 FAR = 2410 sq ft

Norhill Poll/Survey Results:

14. What is the **maximum** allowable living area square footage on an atypical 6,000 - 6,999 square foot lot?

● 2000	14
● 2200	20
● 2300	14
● 2400	32
● 2500	26
● 2600	83



Weighted Avg. – 2,445 sq ft

Poll/Survey 1
March 2024

4. Should there be a restriction on house size in relation to lot size, known as floor-to-area ratio (F.A.R.)? Example: a 2,500 sq ft. house on a 5,000 sq ft. lot has an FAR of 0.50 (2,500/5,000=0.5).

5. If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, what do you feel is an acceptable F.A.R.?

Poll/Survey 2
June 2025

127
Responses

Weighted Avg. 0.47

Weighted Avg. sq ft for 6,240 sf lot @ .47 FAR = 2946 sq ft

HAHC Draft Guideline Review



Draft Guideline Review

Section 2: Measurable Standards

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Additions and renovations must be compatible with the neighborhood's historic infrastructure. To that end, additions and modifications to an existing home should be supportive of and subordinate to (i.e. appear secondary to) the original historic home. Measurable standards may help promote compatibility in terms of setbacks, height, scale, and proportions. It is important to retain the character of the historic houses, and this generally means not removing distinctive elements such as chimneys, decorative venting, and dormers.

Not all characteristics in this section apply to commercial properties. Most properties in the Norhill Historic District are residential; therefore, commercial properties will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For more information on commercial property reviews and considerations, please refer to section 4.2.k.

The measurable standards apply to the construction of additions and new buildings. These requirements generally must be met to obtain a COA.

2.2. SIZE

2.2.a. Residences

Maximum ratios of the **living area** (see definition section) within the house to the lot size are listed in the table below and are expressed as FAR (floor-to-area ratio). These ratios allow for growth while still preserving the historic character and scale of the neighborhood. Norhill is comprised of 855 lots ranging from 5,000 to 6,240 sq ft in size. Based on HCAD information, the most common lot size in Norhill is 100' x 50', which is 5,000 sq ft (63.2% of total lots). This is followed by 104' x 50', which is 5,200 sq ft (11.8% of total lots). To determine the maximum sq ft allowed for your lot, multiply the area of the lot by the FAR percentage shown in the table below.

Example:

- (5,000 sq ft lot x 0.460 FAR) = 2,300 sq ft max. living area for the entire lot.
- (5,200 sq ft lot x 0.455 FAR) = 2,364 sq ft max. living area for the entire lot.
- (5,512 sq ft lot x 0.444 FAR) = 2,450 sq ft max. living area for the entire lot.

Based on HCAD Lot Sizes						
	Dimension	Lot Size	# of Lots	% of Lots	Living Area *	FAR
Standard Lot	100' x 50'	5000 sf	540	63%	2300 sf	0.460
	104' x 50'	5200 sf	101	12%	2364 sf	0.455
	104' x 53'	5512 sf	56	7%	2450 sf	0.444
	104' x 54'	5616 sf	48	6%	2493 sf	0.444
	104' x 60'	6240 sf	20	2%	2700 sf	0.433
	sub total		765	89%		
Non-standard	Varies	<5000 sf	6	1%	2000 sf	0.400
	Varies	5250-5450	20	2%	2334-2421 sf	0.444
	Varies	5550-5600	4	0%	2464-2486 sf	0.444
	Varies	5650-6157	23	3%	2480-2698 sf	0.438
	Varies	>6750 sf	37	4%	2800+ sf	0.415
	sub total		90	11%		
TOTAL			855	100%		

* Living Area: All portions of a property that are conditioned or finished.

Included in FAR Calculations:

- Primary structures (house or main building).
- Sunrooms or enclosed porches with walls and windows.
- First-floor open or screened-in porches with conditioned space above it.
- Attics or garage structures that are finished as well as conditioned.
- Conditioned space that is part of the primary structure or contributes to the overall massing of the property, including (but not limited to) conditioned attics, conditioned attached or detached garages, and conditioned accessory structures of any kind.

Excluded from FAR Calculations:

- Open or screened-in porches with no conditioned space above it.
- Uncovered decks or patios.
- Roof overhangs.
- Attics or garage structures that are finished only but not conditioned.
- Unconditioned space that is part of the primary structure but does not contribute to the overall massing of the property, including (but not limited to) unconditioned attics, carports, detached unconditioned garages, or other unconditioned accessory structures.

Draft Guideline Review

Section 2: Measurable Standards

2.2.b. Porches

Porches are not counted as part of conditioned space unless the total square footage for all porches is larger than 240 sq ft in which case the amount of square footage above 240 sq ft is included in the FAR. If there is living space above a porch, the living space and the porch beneath are included in the total living area. Front porches shall be excluded from FAR, so long as they remain unconditioned with typical proportions as seen throughout the contributing context area. Porte-cochères and carports are not included in the 240 sq ft limit. No addition may be added above a porte-cochère or front porch at any time.

2.2.c. Detached Garages, Enclosed Storage, and Other Outbuildings

Detached garages and outbuildings must be located on the rear of a lot subject to the 60 ft front setback outlined in 2.3.g. When the combined square footage of the existing and proposed detached buildings exceeds 585 sq ft, the excess square footage shall be included in the living area and count towards calculating the maximum living area.

Example: The proposed footprint of a new detached garage is 600 sq ft. Considering the proposed building exceeds 585 sq ft, the remaining 15 sq ft will count towards the maximum living area calculation (FAR) of the property (600-585 = 15 sq ft). The square footage of carports attached to a garage is not included in the Living Area calculation. The roof of such a carport cannot project forward of a garage by more than 20 ft or be wider than 21 ft.

2.3. SETBACKS

Typical homes in Norhill have a 15 ft front setback. All homes must be 15 ft from the front property line (front setback).

Roof overhangs need to be in the scale and character of the original house. Roof overhangs for additions, outbuildings, and garages must be a minimum of 2 ft from any property line. Any addition, outbuilding, or garage that is 3 ft from the property line must meet the overhang minimum rather than match the original house.

No accessory structures may be in the front 15 ft setback line.

Porches may extend over the front building setback line by no more than 6 ft. However, in no case may a porch be forward of the prevailing porch setback of the contributing neighboring properties on either side of the lot in question.

Current City of Houston code allows for a 3 ft side setback so long as the wall is fire-rated and has 25% or less glazing. Otherwise, a 5 ft setback is required.

****NOTE** - All diagrams featured in section 2.3 are representations only and are meant to serve as an aid to the reader. Each project is unique to the individual property and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.**

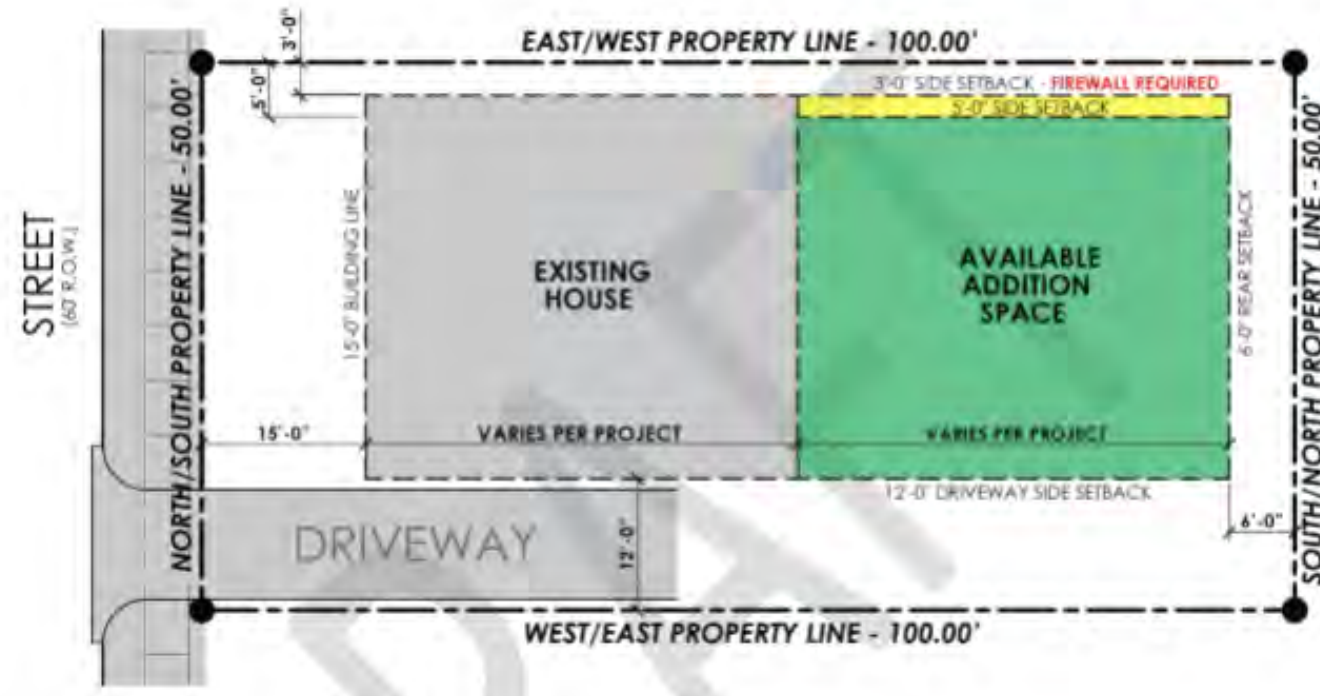
Draft Guideline Review

Interior Lot One-Story Rear Addition

2.3.a. Interior Lot One-Story Rear Addition

Additions shall be complementary to the existing house.

- 3 ft minimum side setback with a fire rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise, 5 ft.
- 12 ft minimum side setback on the driveway side.
- 6 ft rear setback.



Draft Guideline Review

Interior Lot One-Story Side Addition

2.3.b. Interior Lot One-Story Side Addition

- 35 ft minimum front setback.
- 3 ft minimum side setback on non-driveway side with a fire-rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 12 ft minimum side setback on the driveway side.

**Only one side addition allowed.

** A projecting bay window can be forward of the minimum front setback.

** A projecting bay window can extend a maximum of 3 ft from the side addition.

** A projecting bay window must be less than 8 ft wide.

Draft Guideline Review

Interior Lot Two-Story Rear Addition

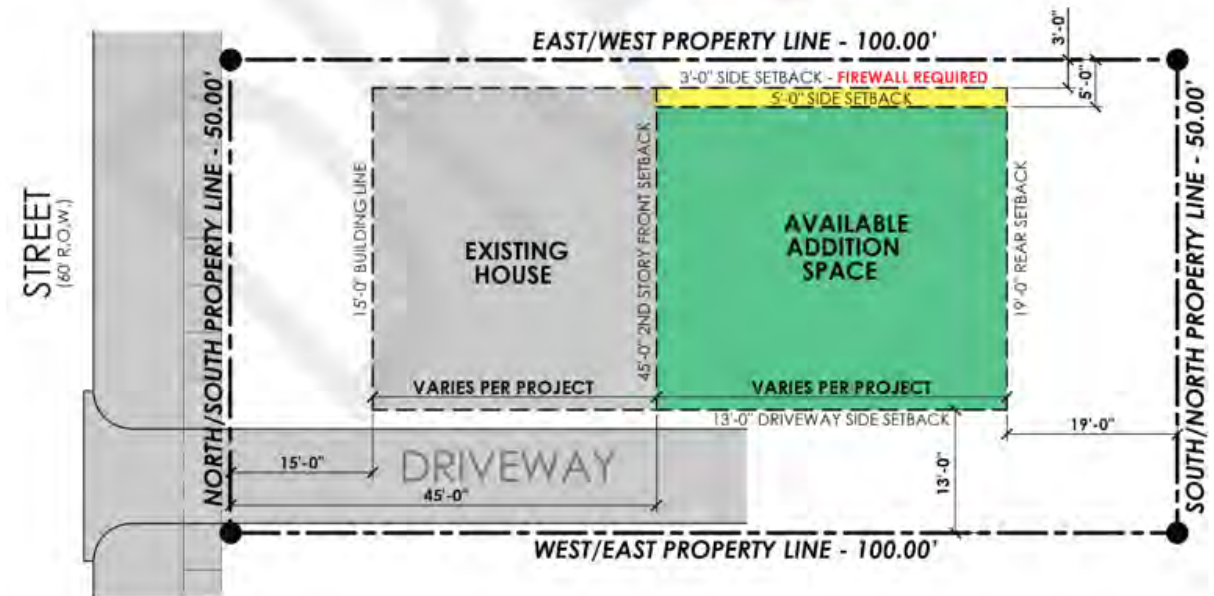
2.3.c. Interior Lot Two-Story Rear Addition

The addition shall be subordinate to the existing house and in keeping with the scale and overall massing of the original structure. The owner is encouraged to limit the addition's width, parallel to the street, to reduce the visual impact and massing to maintain the compatibility of the structure to contributing structures. No two-story addition shall extend past the sides of the original structure, nor shall they extend forward more than 50% of the depth of the original structure.

- 45 ft minimum front setback from the property line.
- 3 ft minimum side setback non-driveway side with a fire-rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 13 ft minimum side setback on the driveway side.
- 19 ft minimum rear setback from back property line (assuming a 15 ft front setback).

The minimum rear setback may be offset by the same linear footage if the front setback is deeper than 15 ft.

Example: A front setback of 18 ft would result in a minimum rear setback of 16 ft. Second-story balconies will be considered within the context of the neighboring properties and on a case-by-case basis. These types of balconies are discouraged unless modest and compatible with the existing contributing structures. No second-story balcony can be built within 19 ft of the rear property line.



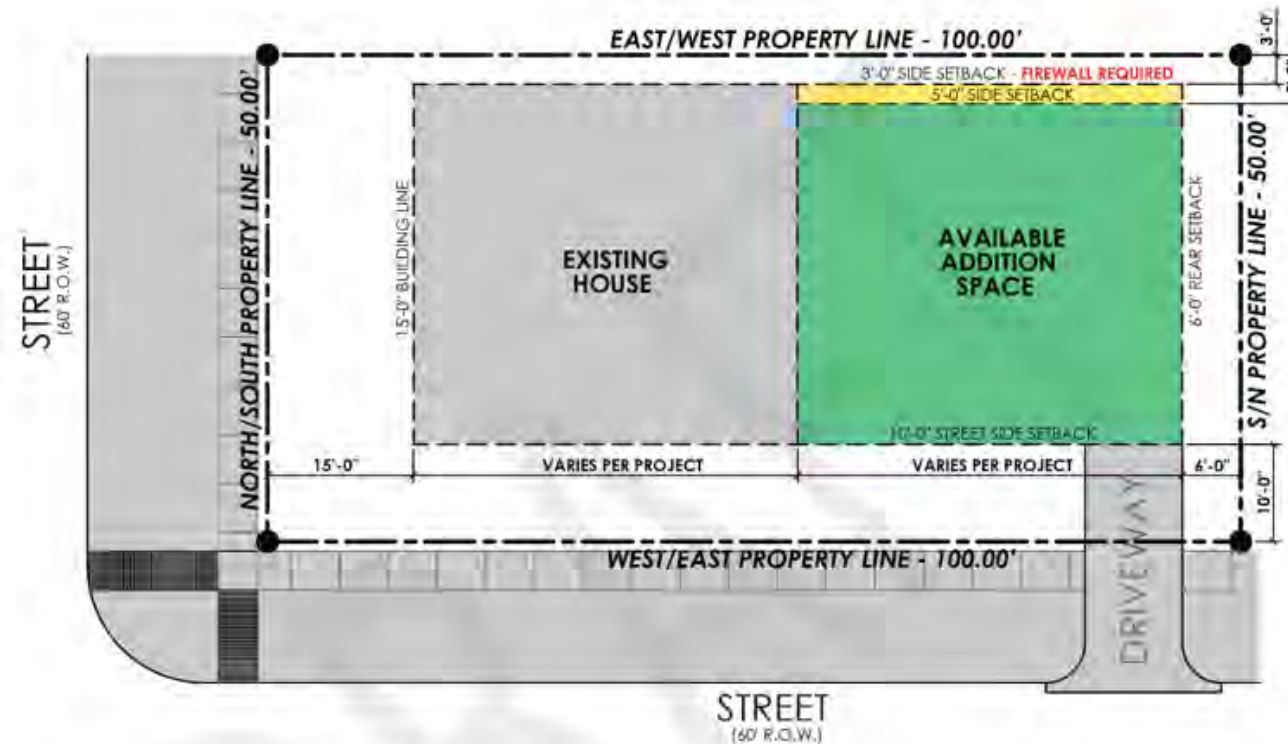
Draft Guideline Review

Corner Lot One-Story Rear Addition

2.3.d. Corner Lot One-Story Rear Addition

All homes must be 15 ft from the front property line (front setback).

- 3 ft minimum side setback with a fire-rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 10 ft minimum side setback on the side street face.
- 6 ft rear setback



Draft Guideline Review

Corner Lot One-Story Side Addition

2.3.e. Corner Lot One-Story Side Addition

(Atypical lots may require individual consideration)

- 35 ft minimum front setback.
- 3 ft minimum side setback on non-driveway side with a fire-rated wall and 25% glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 12 ft minimum side setback on the driveway side.

** Only one side addition is allowed.

** A projecting bay window can be forward of the minimum front setback.

** A projecting bay window can extend a maximum of 3 ft from the side addition.

** A projecting bay window must be less than 8 ft wide.

Draft Guideline Review

Corner Lot Two-Story Rear Addition

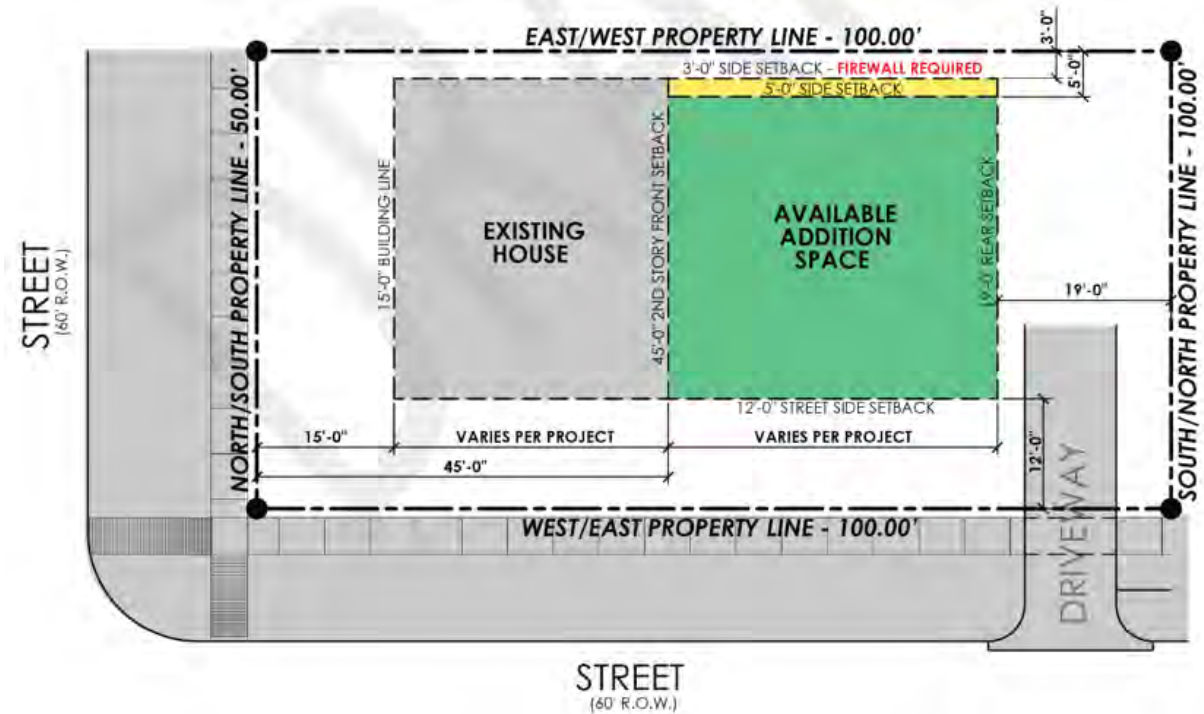
2.3.f. Corner Lot Two-Story Rear Addition

Draft Guideline Review shall be subordinate to the existing house and in keeping with the scale and overall massing of the original structure. The owner is encouraged to limit the addition's width, parallel to the street, to reduce the visual impact and massing to maintain compatibility with contributing structures. No two-story addition shall extend past the sides of the original structure, nor shall they extend forward more than 50% of the depth of the original structure.

- 45 ft minimum front setback from the property line.
- 3 ft minimum side setback with a fire rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 12 ft minimum side setback on the side street face.
- 19 ft minimum rear setback from back property line.

The minimum rear setback may be offset by the same linear footage if the front setback is deeper than 15 ft.

Example: A front setback of 18 ft would result in a minimum rear setback of 16 ft. Second-story balconies on the rear or street side of a lot will be considered within the context of the neighboring properties and on a case-by-case basis. These types of balconies are discouraged unless modest and compatible with existing contributing structures. No second-story balcony can be built within 19 ft of the rear property line.



Draft Guideline Review

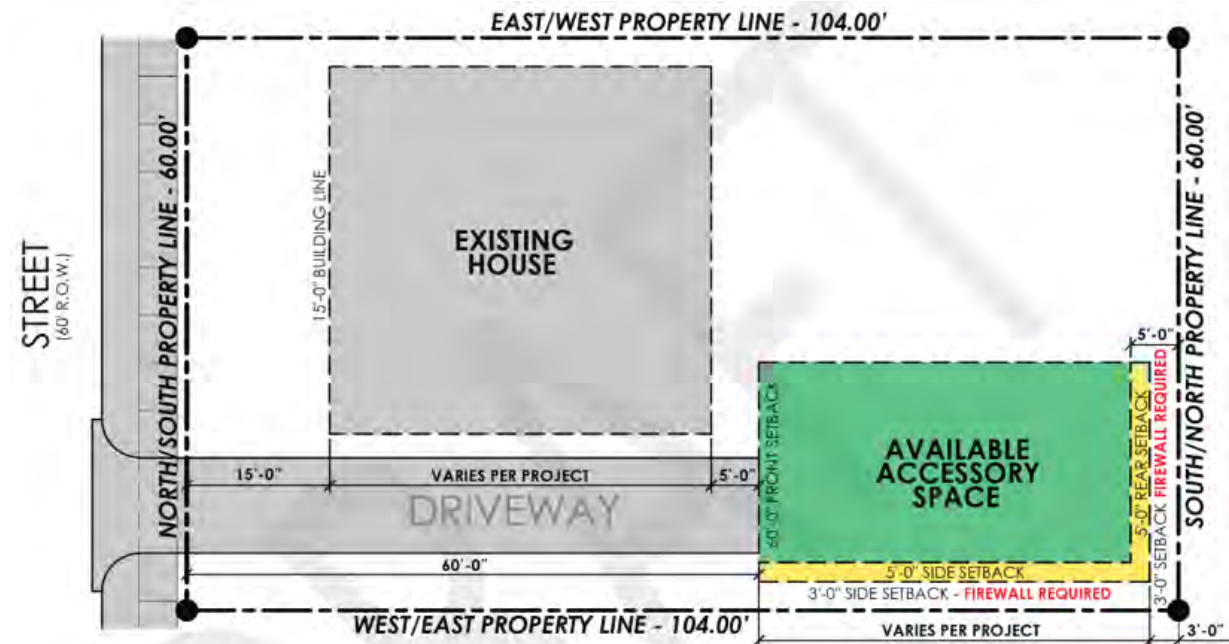
Interior Lot Porte-Cochère, Carports, Auxiliary Buildings, and Garage Construction/Addition

2.3.g. Interior Lot Porte-Cochère, Carports, Auxiliary Buildings, and Garage Construction/Addition

- 60 ft minimum front setback from the front property line to any garage or outbuilding (carports included).
- 3 ft minimum side setback with a fire rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 5 ft minimum between exterior walls of garage and house.
- 3 - 5 ft minimum rear setback as per city code.

- ** The width of a garage parallel to the rear property line is limited to 23 ft in width if the rear wall is set back 3 - 5 ft from the rear property line.
- ** The width of the garage parallel to the rear property line can be greater than 23 ft in width if it is 6 ft or greater from the rear property line.
- ** No secondary outbuilding structures (garage or carport) may have a combined solid wall exceeding 25 ft in length along the side property line.

A breezeway can attach the house to the garage. The width of the breezeway is limited to not more than 8 ft in width from outside of stud to outside of stud. The plate height of the breezeway shall not exceed a 9 ft plate. A porte-cochère must be a minimum of 35 ft from the front property line and no more than 20 ft deep. The outside face of the support columns should be a minimum of 5 ft from the side property line. A porte-cochère cannot have a second-floor addition above it. A residence can only have a carport or a porte-cochère, but it cannot have both.



Draft Guideline Review

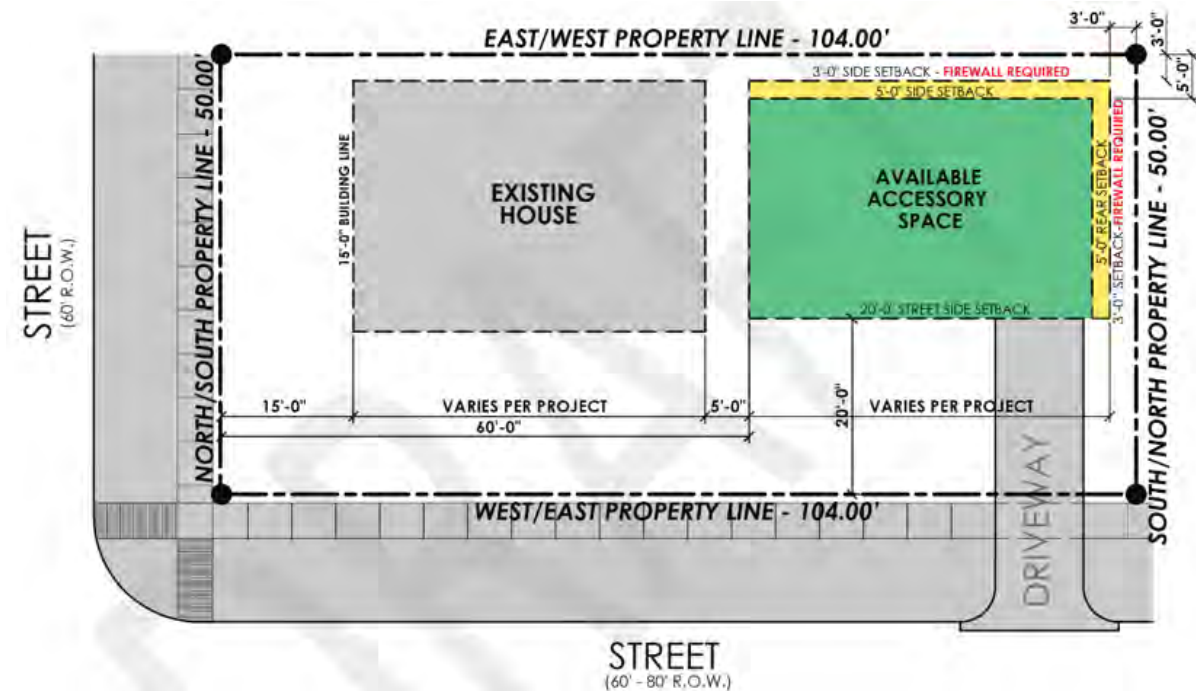
Corner Lot Porte-Cochère, Carports, Auxiliary Buildings, and Garage Construction/Addition

2.3.h. Corner Lot Porte-Cochère, Carports, Auxiliary Buildings, and Garage Construction/Addition

- 60 ft minimum front setback from the front property line to an outbuilding.
 - o The roof of such a carport cannot project forward of a garage by more than 20 ft or be wider than 21 ft.
- 20 ft minimum side setback from street side property line to an outbuilding.
- 3 ft minimum side setback on the interior lot side of the property with a fire rated wall and 25% or less glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
- 5 ft minimum between exterior walls of garage and house.
- 3 - 5 ft minimum rear setback as per city code.

- ** The width of a garage parallel to the rear property line is limited to 23 ft in width if the rear wall is set back 3 - 5 ft from the rear property line.
- ** The width of the garage parallel to the rear property line can be greater than 23 ft in width if it is 6 ft or greater from the rear property line.
- ** No secondary outbuilding structures (e.g., garage and/or carport) may have a combined solid wall exceeding 25 ft in length along the side property line.

Garages on corner lots are limited to 585 sq ft. Carports cannot extend past the side face of the house, and they cannot be attached to the house. A breezeway can attach the house to the garage. The width of the breezeway is limited to 8 ft in width from outside of stud to outside of stud. A connection made between the house and garage can be enclosed and conditioned at a minimum of 5 ft in length, no more than 9ft in length. This space must be set back from the house and the garage to appear subordinate. Plate height of the breezeway or connection shall not exceed 9 ft.



Draft Guideline Review

Measurable Standards - Height

2.4. HEIGHT

2.4.a. Roof Pitch

Roofs are required to have a roof slope between 5-over-12 and 7-over-12. Carports attached to a garage can have a flat roof. An 8-over-12 roof slope will be considered on a case-by-case basis if the existing slope of the house is 8-over-12. A steeper roof pitch may be considered when mimicking original architectural details.

2.4.b. One-Story Addition

The new construction is limited to a maximum height of 11'-6" from existing grade (ground/dirt) to top of first floor plate to match the existing house plate height.

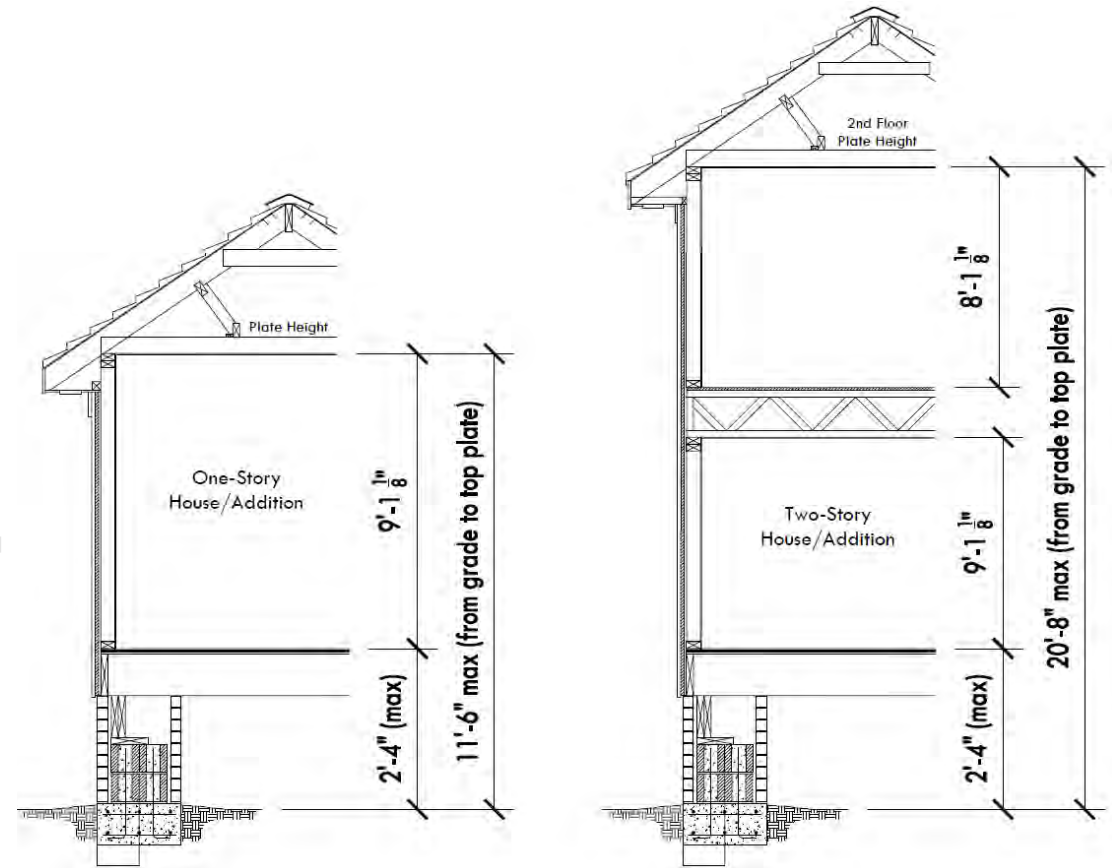
New addition/construction plate height cannot be greater than 9'-1 1/8". If the existing house has a plate height higher than 9 ft, an exception will be considered.

2.4.c. Two-Story Addition

Distance from grade to the top of the second-floor plate cannot exceed 20'-8".

The maximum ridge height from grade for any residence is 28'.

The roof of a two-story addition can be either a hip or a gable.



Draft Guideline Review

Measurable Standards - Height

2.4.d. Garage, Porte-Cochère, Carport Construction/Addition

The plate height for a new garage cannot exceed a 9 ft stud height but also must be less than or equal to the plate height of the house from grade. The ridge height of a one-story garage may not be taller than 17 ft above grade. A two-story garage may not exceed 24 ft above grade. Existing two-story garages may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that while the HAHC may grant approval of a new two-story garage under its authority in conjunction with these guidelines, an applicant must still satisfy their valid neighborhood deed restrictions or risk liability for noncompliance. An applicant's deed restrictions and the City's preservation ordinance operate independently of each other and are not enforced by the Houston Office of Preservation. Proposals for two-story garages will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Garage roof pitch is to be less than or equal to the pitch of the existing contributing home and/or its addition; a steeper pitch will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the slope of the house's roof. Neither garages nor porte-cochères may have a flat roof. Carports may have a flat roof. A carport should be designed with the same integrity as the primary structure on the lot.

A porte-cochère must be one story and have a hip roof or gable. The porte-cochère must be subordinate in height to the first story of the main house.

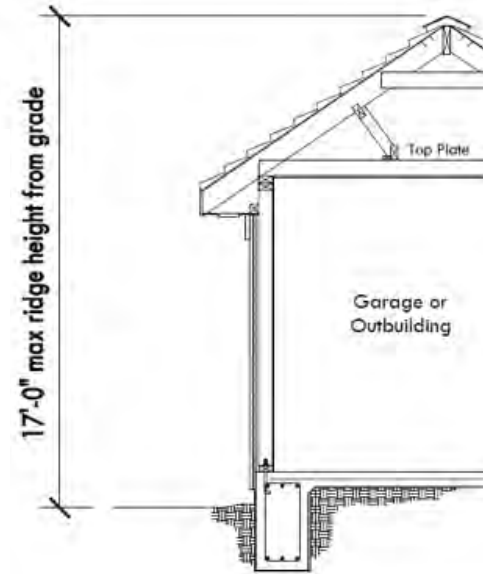
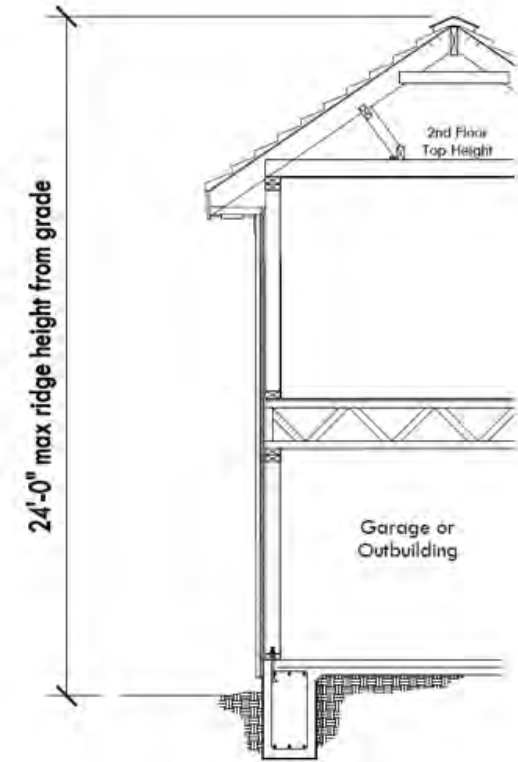


Plate height must not be greater than the plate height of the house from grade.



Draft Guideline Review

Measurable Standards

2.5. NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Any new construction must follow all existing setback lines and size limitations established in this document. These guidelines provide that a new construction with two stories must match the width, height, overall massing, and scale of the components typical of the historic district. The size of a new construction is also limited by lot size as defined by the FAR chart in section 2.2.a. The style of new construction must be compatible with the architectural styles (Craftsman, Bungalows, Prairie, American Four Square, Tudor Revival Cottage, etc.), found in Norhill.

2.6. MATERIALS AND DESIGN

2.6.a. Character and Style

Norhill has maintained a style consistent with the original homes constructed between the 1920 and 1930, apart from a few structures constructed shortly after this time frame in the 1940s. Homeowners should ensure any additions are sympathetic to the historic design aesthetic. Elements in an addition at the rear that cannot be seen from the street may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any addition should be compatible and appropriate to the exterior features of the existing, contributing house. For example, the new siding may match that of the existing house, although minor differences are encouraged to differentiate the existing structure from the new construction (refer to Section 5: Stewardship and Maintenance for more information).

2.6.b. Doors and Windows

Every effort should be made to retain the style and appearance of the original doors and windows. If the doors and/or windows are damaged, all efforts must be made to match the stylistic appearance and quality of the original. Windows must be inset and recessed, wood or wood clad, of the same style, proportion, and character as the original windows of a house (if remodeling) as well as the homes in the context area. This includes matching the window depth in the wall as well as surrounding trim work. Alternative window materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the proposed window location, manufacturer's design and their compatibility with the originals.

This includes the placement of sashes which are set in the wall and not flush to the exterior (refer to Section 5: Stewardship and Maintenance in window Section 5.3.b. for more information on the proper installation for inset and recessed window profiles).

No vinyl windows are to be used on the contributing/non-contributing structure, per the 2025 HOP Window Policy

Draft Guideline Review

Measurable Standards

2.6.c. Roofs and Eaves

Roof eaves (roof overhangs) should match the design and depth of the existing house where possible. Roof material should be shingle, primarily asphalt/composite, with other materials considered on a case-by-case basis. Skylights should be located towards the back half of the building and on additions only with limited visibility from the street.

2.6.d. Dormers

No dormers may be added to the front elevation. Dormers are subordinate in scale and character to the primary roof. Where they are already present, historic dormers should be preserved. If a new dormer is desired, it must be compatible with the character of the historic building and subordinate to the primary roof.

- Dormers must be functional — to create additional living space or allow light to enter an attic space — not merely decorative. Use a simple design that can be distinguished from, but is compatible with, any historic dormers.
- The style of a new dormer should be in keeping with the style of the house.
- Locate a new single dormer in a location that is toward the rear of the house and on the side of the roof that is as close to the middle of the lot as possible. Do not locate a new dormer on a front-facing roof. Do not extend the dormer over the eave of the roof; set it back from the eave.
- If two dormers are desired on the same side of the roof, they may be arranged with a historically appropriate spacing between them and do not necessarily need to be located toward the rear of the building.
- If two dormers are desired and they will be on opposite sides of the roof, they may not extend to or cover the ridge of the roof, and they must be located on the rear half of the roof.

Draft Guideline Review

Measurable Standards

2.6.e. Painting of Historic Brick

No new, existing, or restored masonry on any structure may be painted. Only previously painted masonry may be repainted.

2.7. SITE PLAN ELEMENTS

2.7.a. Impervious Coverage

Lots may have a maximum of 65% impervious lot coverage. Lot coverage includes the residence, porches or decks, garage, outbuildings, driveways, walkways, and swimming pool surrounds. This is exempt from historic regulation and does not require a COA.

2.7.b. Fences

Fences do not require a COA and are not regulated by HOP, however, the NNA desires that all fences be consistent. For more information, contact the NNA and City of Houston Permitting Center for code enforcement details.

Draft Guideline Review

HAHC Comment for Sections: 3, 4, & 5

SECTION 3: CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS PROCESS (COA) & ORDINANCES

SECTION 4: ABOUT THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

This section describes the history of Norhill, the character of the district, the architectural styles, and significant buildings contained within it. Although strictly informational, this material will help property owners and design professionals understand what makes the historic district significant, as well as how to identify character-defining features of historic buildings and prioritize those features for preservation during a project.

SECTION 5: STEWARDSHIP AND MAINTENANCE

Good stewardship involves the responsible use and management of historic properties, protecting them for future generations. This is best practiced by maintaining the features that define the character of individual historic buildings, structures, sites, and objects of historic significance. When individual historic resources are appropriately maintained, the historic district — the collection of those resources — will be preserved as well. By taking the time to learn about character-defining features and how to treat them sensitively, we can serve as good stewards for properties in historic districts while they are in our care.



Close Hearing & Public Comment

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

FW: Public hearing notice

 PD - Historic Preservation
To: Jackson, Terrance - PD

  Reply  Reply All  Forward  

Tue 2/17/2025 11:01 AM

 Norhill_Inventory.pdf 119 KB
 City of Houston - Historic Preservation Manual - Historic District - Norhill - Map.pdf 1 MB

[This message came from outside the City of Houston email system. Please be careful while clicking links, opening attachments, or replying to this email.]

Dear Sir or Madam,

As I am unable to attend, I wish to comment before the Public Hearing Notice for the Norhill Historic District on March 24, 2026 at 2:30pm regarding the Norhill Neighborhood Association (NNA) building restrictions.

I am attaching what is currently available on houstontx.gov. As you can see the information is over 25 years old.

I would like to state from the outset that there are no mandatory HOA fees with respect to the NNA. We moved into our house in Norhill during January of 2023. As we were moving in, a member of the NNA board approached the house and stated our 6' fence was too high. After I pointed out several fences in the neighborhood that are 6' and higher, he left. In fact, according to the City of Houston only a fence higher than 8' requires a building permit. Also, according to property code chapter 202 "a property owners' association may not adopt or enforce a restrictive covenant that prevents a property owner from building or installing security measures, including but not limited to a security camera, motion detector, or **perimeter fence**." This annoyance continued as we were planning on adding a 2nd story to the house. We were told this was not possible. We then hired a lawyer and provided photos of more than a dozen homes in the Norhill Neighborhood that have a 2nd story of various sizes. We sent this information to the NNA asking them to explain where our plans violated the rules, and we never heard back. We should not have had to pay for a lawyer for all of this.

The point of all this is to demonstrate that the NNA board makes arbitrary and capricious decisions, based on 'harmony'. When it was pointed out that what we are trying to do already exists in the neighborhood, we were informed 'those homes were grandfathered in' or 'those homes slipped through the cracks'.

It is my strong opinion that the City of Houston should have the final decision on any major remodeling, e.g. adding a story, adding a garage, etc. If the decisions are left to the NNA, lawyers will no doubt be involved.

In summary, an arbitrary neighborhood association – where no dues are required – should NOT be allowed to tell homeowners what they can and cannot do with their homes. Frankly, the NNA should have no role in historic preservation - this should be 100% the responsibility of the City of Houston.

Sincerely,
Prof. P. Shiv Halasyamani, PhD

P. Shiv Halasyamani, Ph.D., FRSC & AAAS
Professor & Graduate Chair
Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Chair
Associate Editor - Inorganic Chemistry & ACS Organic and Inorganic Au
Department of Chemistry, University of Houston
112 Fleming Building, Houston, TX 77204-5003
<https://functionalcrystals.com>

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Norhill Guidelines



Madison Guerinot <mcmurme@gmail.com>

To PD - Historic Preservation



Fri 2/20/2026 11:39 AM

[This message came from outside the City of Houston email system. Please be careful while clicking links, opening attachments, or replying to this email.]

Hello,

Thank you for your work on the revised guidelines. They are a significant improvement over the first draft. However, I do not support including a conditioned detached garage in the calculation of Living Area (pg. 13).

I understand that the FAR guidelines are intended to limit massing. Whether a detached garage is conditioned does not affect the structure's massing and therefore should not factor into the calculation. Many homeowners use detached garages for storage, exercise, or hobby space. In Houston's climate, these spaces must be conditioned in order to be usable and safe.

Even if a detached garage is finished and conditioned, it cannot legally or practically serve as primary living space. As such, counting it as Living Area unnecessarily restricts homeowners' ability to provide safe, functional space for their families.

Additionally, there is already a provision stating that garages exceeding a certain size are automatically included as Living Area (2.2.c). That existing size limitation addresses any concerns related to massing. An additional restriction based solely on air conditioning is therefore redundant and unrelated to the stated goal.

In summary, limiting air conditioning in detached garages creates more harm than benefit because it:

1. Reduces the functionality of detached garages on already small homes and lots where space is limited;
2. Encourages unsafe conditions in Houston's extreme heat;
3. Does not affect the massing of the structure; and
4. Duplicates existing size-based restrictions that already address massing concerns.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Madison Guerinot

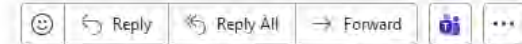
Draft Guidelins – Public Comments

Submitted via email


Norhill guidelines



john barnes <davidbarnesv71@gmail.com>
To: PD - Historic Preservation



Mon 3/16/2026 10:44 AM

 You replied to this message on 3/16/2026 12:23 PM

[This message came from outside the City of Houston email system. Please be careful while clicking links, opening attachments, or replying to this email.]

I strongly oppose any restrictions that hinder or increase costs for the home owner trying to keep their property in good order and usable for their personal circumstances. One of the main reasons I bought my property in Norhill 40 years ago is that there were few restrictions. I was therefore very surprised it took me over a year and much more money than it should have when my car port was destroyed by a tree during the Derecho a couple of years ago mainly because the approval process is so slow and cumbersome.

I now think these restrictions are hurting rather than helping with my property value. I have started hearing rumors that realtors are discouraging folks from buying and repairing in my area because the folks involved with approval are so difficult to work with. If the resources are not in place to deal with approvals in a very timely and understandable manner especially after storm damage then new restrictions should not be put in place.

I used to get multiple mailings and phone calls each month wanting to buy my property but especially during the last two years this rarely happens anymore. Also after decades walking through the area I see more run down properties in Norhill than I do on the west side of Studewood. It used to be the other way around. I blame these kind of restrictions.

The United States and Texas fought for independence because of government overreach. Therefore it seems especially in (Sam) Houston Texas it should be very difficult for the government and private groups to enact new rules that dictate what the home owner can do with large parts of his property. Even more so in our current inflationary times.

John Barnes
1115 W. Gardner

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Dennis Alvarez
1141 W Melwood St.
Houston, TX 77009

March 17th, 2026

Houston Archeological and Historical Commission

RE: Public Hearing - Norhill Design Guidelines

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the City of Houston's adoption of the proposed Design Guidelines for the Norhill Historic District. These guidelines represent an important step in preserving the historic character of our neighborhood, and I appreciate the significant effort that has gone into their development.

With that support, I offer the following comments on two specific provisions where I believe clarification or modification would strengthen the guidelines.

1. Definition of "Living Area."

The current definition states that living area "includes all portions of a property that are conditioned, part of, or attached to the primary residence." As written, this definition could exclude conditioned space in garages or outbuildings, even though those spaces meaningfully contribute to the overall square footage of a house on a lot.

I recommend revising the definition to read: "Living Area includes all portions of a property that are conditioned," with a cross-reference to the relevant FAR calculation section for further detail on what is included and excluded.

2. Director's Authority to Revise the Design Guidelines

I have a concern regarding Section 3.1, which grants the Director the authority to revise these Design Guidelines. The guidelines were developed through a lengthy, inclusive process involving feedback from residents, property owners, and multiple stakeholders. Allowing revisions without a similar community process creates the risk that the guidelines could be altered with each new mayoral administration, undermining the stability and integrity that historic district protections are meant to provide.

I note that Section 3.1 does include language requiring the Director to "seek and consider the views of the public" before adopting any policy revision. While I appreciate the inclusion of this language, I believe it should be strengthened to require a more formal and transparent review process before any substantive changes to the guidelines can be made.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,



Dennis Alvarez, AIA
281-948-2734
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Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Norhill Historic Guidelines



Paul Jarvis <paul.e.jarvis@gmail.com>

To: PD - Historic Preservation



Wed 3/18/2026 11:51 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to support small scale neighborhood development in the Norhill neighborhood. I love the feeling of the neighborhood and love not having neighbors looming over my backyard. I support the Historic guidelines and would like to preserve the unique character of the neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Paul Jarvis
924 Pizer St, Houston, TX 77009

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

City's Design Guidelines for Norhill

Issue #1

Definition of Living Area: *The living area includes all portions of a property that are conditioned, part of, or attached to the primary residence.*

By this definition, living area would not include conditioned space in a garage or outbuildings even though these spaces contribute to overall massing on a lot. In addition, "conditioned" may need a definition?

Change to: Living Area: The living area includes all portions of a property that are conditioned. See 2.2.a for further definition of what is included and excluded from FAR Calculations.

Note: If the above definition is changed as suggested, then 2.2.a can remain as written. If not, then you need to add something such as - "see below for what is included in a FAR calculations".

Issue #2

2.3.c. Interior Lot Two-Story Rear Addition

The document states "nor shall they extend forward more than 50% of the depth of the original structure".

- 45 ft minimum front setback from the property line

The minimum rear setback may be offset by the same linear footage if the front setback is deeper than 15 ft.

What is definition of "original structure"? Is it the structure as it exists prior to renovation or is it the size of the house as shown on the Sanborn maps when it was originally constructed? Either way, it is not a measurement which provides consistency. The 50% provision should therefore be eliminated.

Suggestion, Limit the second floor setback to 45' from the front property line, with no other modifiers. Eliminate the provision allowing the rear setback to be offset when the front setback exceeds 15 feet.

Poll results showed 77% of responders want Guidelines. On previous polling the weighted rear setback was 19'. Residents want to protect light, air, and the visual impact of second floor additions.

Creating offsets causes confusion. Houses which are set back further will just have less of a distance from the front of the house to the second floor which is preferable to encroaching into backyards. Over time, this approach would also establish a consistent line across the neighborhood beyond which second floor additions would not extend.

2.3.f. Corner Lot Two-Story Addition should similarly be modified.

Issue #3

The NNA does not approve two-story garages. Allowing them within the City's Guidelines sets up conflict and confusion. Two-story garages should therefore be eliminated from the Guidelines.

Issue #4

3.1 Gives the director the authority to revise the Design Guidelines.

These Guidelines have been developed through a lengthy process involving feedback from multiple stakeholders. Allowing unilateral revisions creates the possibility that Guidelines could be altered with each new mayoral administration.

Protection of Historic Neighborhoods should be independent of political changes.

Additional comments:

Definition of Ridge Height: Current language reads: "as measured from existing natural grade relative to a fixed point in the right-of-way, such as the crown of the street or a manhole cover."

Change to: "as measured from the average natural grade of the lot".

Definition of Shall-Approve Addition: The definition is confusing. Doesn't 1.1.b eliminate all Shall-Approves? How is the historic preservation ordinance different and what does it allow that is not stated here?

Suggest eliminating everything beyond "which is a different set of criteria conditions from City of Houston Code of Ordinances 33-241: . . ."

2.3.g: Both the City Draft and NNA Guidelines have a 5' minimum distance between the exterior walls of the garage and house. Based on plans reviewed and the limitations of space this should be reduced to a 3' clear space between siding face of a house and siding face of a garage.

2.3.g: The NNA eliminated the limit to the of a combined solid wall for garage and carport due to the requirement of a maximum 25% open space in a wall of a carport when less than 5' from a property line. This would mean no one could have a carport in front of a garage.

2.3.h: On a Corner Lot, the conditioned connector should be not more than 9 ft in width – not length. NNA does not have a combined solid wall limitation along the side property line of 25'.

3.5 Administrative Approvals

Construction of: Free-standing (detached) garages, free standing carports or other secondary structures as long as they have a footprint of 600 sf or less and are located at the rear of the lot.

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There are situations where such structures by their design may be in conflict with the historic character of the neighborhood. They should go through the approval process.

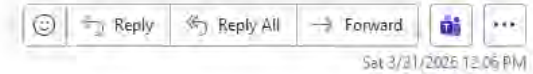
Differences from NNA Guidelines:

- 2.3.b: NNA has 37' minimum front setback for one-story side addition interior lot.
NNA limits side addition to a one-story addition on an interior lot to 9'.
- 2.3.c: NNA requires a 5' side setback on two story additions.
NNA requires a 14' side setback on the driveway side.
- 2.3.e: NNA has 37' minimum front setback for one-story side additions on corner lots.
NNA limits side addition to a one-story addition on a corner lot to 6'.
- 2.3.f: NNA has a 20' minimum rear setback on corner lots for two story additions.
NNA requires a 5' side setback on two story additions.


Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Norhill Neighborhood guidelines comments for Oct 24



Sat 3/21/2025 12:06 PM

 Karen NNA <nnapresident26@gmail.com>
To: Williamson, Robert - PD
Cc: PD - Historic Preservation; Jackson, Terrance - PD; Arslan, Yasmim - PD

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Greetings:

I am unable to attend the meeting next Tuesday October 24 regarding Norhill Neighborhood guidelines. As such, as a vested owner in the neighborhood, I am sending a few thoughts.

First of all, I strongly support the guidelines. While I will note a couple of concerns here, I want to start by stating the necessity for consistent guidelines that include options for reasonable expansion while still strongly support the charm and history of the neighborhood.

In terms of areas of the guidelines that I am concerned about, primarily these two:

1. The seemingly blanket authority of any city director to revise guidelines. This undermines the integrity of the guidelines by allowing the guidelines to be constantly revisited based on appointments by elected officials. How can this be re-written in such a way that assures consistency across election cycles, as well as a strong process with the neighborhood - if a change is going to be made?
2. Secondly, garage apartments are currently restricted via our deed restrictions. I personally believe that any secondary conditioned space or garage apartment structures (that currently exist) must be included in the allowable square footage as dictated in these guidelines. By both city ordinance and deed restrictions, this neighborhood is "single family" restricted. As such, any living space on the property should be included in the overall scope/size of the house. Clarity on this within guidelines seems necessary.

As a follow up to item 2, I would note that the fact that the city has allowed garage apartments along the way has created tension in our neighborhood. If the city chooses to allow garage apartments (I do not support this as I believe that neighborhood deed restrictions would need to change for this not to present a conflict), then the city should require that all conditioned structures meet the square footage and footprint as dictated within current guidelines. Otherwise, it is a huge loophole to be exploited which in turn creates a bunch of issues - slippery slope and scale of buildings on the property is of utmost concern in this small bungalow neighborhood.

IMO: It is possible to support urban density and still support the few pockets of historic remaining in Houston. There are many areas throughout Houston that are providing strong urban density. There are not many historic neighborhoods. Historic neighborhoods make Houston interesting, vibrant, and diverse - an interesting international city that draws all kinds of people with different tastes and aesthetics. Historic neighborhoods provide something that addresses both history and diversity. The charm of Norhill lies in the small working class homes built here - along with the open spaces of the esplanade. Allowing tall large scale /scope structures within this bungalow aesthetic destroys the very essence of what makes it a special neighborhood for the city. Balancing these elements over time is important. The guidelines are a great example of the city balancing both history and reasonable expansion. Thank you.


Please confirm that my comments will be included at the Oct 24 meeting.

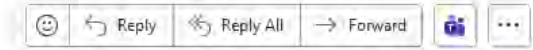
Karen Stokes
1015 W Cottage St
77009

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Support for Norhill Design Guidelines

 Adam Till <tilladam@hotmail.com>
To: PD – Historic Preservation; Williamson, Robert - PD; Jackson, Terrance - PD; Arslan, Yasmin - PD



Sun 3/22/2026 6:37 PM

[This message came from outside the City of Houston email system. Please be careful while clicking links, opening attachments, or replying to this email.]

Adam Till
1022 Peddie St
Houston, TX 77009

I am writing to voice my support for the passage of Norhill Design Guidelines for which there will be a public hearing on March 24th. These Guidelines are the result of many years of deliberation and diligence on behalf of the residents of Norhill, and are a product of intense surveying and community debate. They provide protection for the charm, character, and uniqueness of Norhill, while allowing current and future residents clarity, consistency, and flexibility in the realizing and renovating of their homes.

I will point out a few areas that I feel could be improved. I think the definition of “Living Area” in Section 1.2 should be further clarified to simply state: “Living Area is defined as all portions of a property that are conditioned.” This will more closely match the expanded language and definitions laid out in section 2.2a.

I also believe that in regards to section 2.3.C “Interior Lot Two Story Rear Addition”, there should be no relaxation of the 19’ rear set back and that the minimum front setback should be 45’ in all instances.

Lastly, section 3.1 has a few sentences that give the Director of Planning and Development latitude to institute policy revisions to the Guidelines. I think there should be further language to restrict and confine those powers of revision by a political appointee. There should be the same rigorous processes in place to make revisions as there are for original approval.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Adam Till

Sent from my iPad

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Norhill Design Comment



Karen Noecker <karenjnoecker@gmail.com>
To: PD - Historic Preservation



Sat 3/21/2026 3:49 PM

[This message came from outside the City of Houston email system. Please be careful while clicking links, opening attachments, or replying to this email.]

Page 33 continues to use an outdated map which shows lot 0 as non contributory. It is NOT. It is a through street - Watson. It was in 2013 when you started using this picture and it remains. FIX IT! Better yet - close it off so that we can eliminate all of the speeding cut through traffic. I have to constantly explain this to HCAD as well. You would think a Planning & Development department would at least rely on accurate maps. It brings into question the accuracy of all of the information provided.

We also deeply disagree with the restrictions that dictate the size of a second floor addition through the artificial constraints based on lot size and immaterial setback from rear. This undermines our ability or those of a future resident to add square footage to meet their family needs. (Not the first time this has been brought up in this process)

Specifically, the 19' rear setback which significantly restricts a second floor addition's square footage. As a home with an existing extension that is well within proposed rear setbacks, we are now limiting our add on capabilities. This would force us to add on to the back plus add a second floor just to get to the guidelines' max sq. footage. It appears to be an extremely arbitrary number without any explanation. Why 19'? It has zero impact on the impervious land usage and seems to be only "an opinion" of what the architects think looks better. Several homes would end up looking like one humped camel with this design. Our home certainly would. If you just do not want additions that go to the end of the first floor then have a three foot setback from the existing rear.







Thank you for listening again,
Karen

--
Karen Noecker

Draft Guidelines – Public Comments

Submitted via email

Adoption of Norhill Historic District

 Bret Baccus <bcbaccus@gmail.com>
To:  PD - Historic Preservation;  Williamson, Robert - PD;  Jackson, Terrance - PD;  Arslan, Yasmin - PD
Cc:  Virginia Kelsey

  Reply  Reply All  Forward  

Mon 3/23/2026 10:49 AM

[This message came from outside the City of Houston email system. Please be careful while clicking links, opening attachments, or replying to this email.]

Houston Archeological and Historic Commission:

I am writing to express my support for City to adopt the proposed Design Guidelines for the Norhill Historic District.

I had a bungalow in Montrose for almost 20 years. The lack of guidelines and zoning significantly altered the neighborhood. I moved to Norhill 5 years ago because I specifically wanted a preserved bungalow neighborhood. It is the preservation of Norhill that I specifically sought and why I live here. I ask your help in ensuring our preservation.

I hope to attend your meeting in person tomorrow on March 24 to more directly support this adoption.

Many thanks,
Bret Baccus
1129 E. 16th
Houston, TX 77009

bcbaccus@gmail.com

Next Steps

Next Steps:

- Preservation Staff will consider, review and revise as per comments from the HAHC, public, and comments received via email or otherwise.
- Formal HAHC Public Hearing (TBD) to recommend the Final Draft of the Norhill Design Guidelines to City Council.
- Public Hearing date to be set for review by the Quality of Life (city council).
- Public Hearing date set with City Council for their review and comments.
- Final Draft of the Norhill Design Guidelines on City Council Agenda to be formally adopted and officially implemented.



Thank You!

Project Manager

Terrance D. Jackson

Project Manager

City of Houston - Planning and
Development Department



Phone 832-393-6621

Email Terrance.Jackson@houstontx.gov



**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**